Not Quite White: Arab Americans and the Boundaries of Racial/Ethnic Similarity

By

Nader Hakim

M.A., University of Kansas, 2015

B.S., University of Michigan, 2012

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Psychology and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

_____

Chair: Nyla Branscombe

_____

Monica Biernat

_____

Eric Hanley

_____

Majid Hannoum

_____

Ludwin Molina

Date Defended: 7 May 2019

The dissertation committee for Nader Hakim certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Not Quite White: Arab Americans and the Boundaries of Racial/Ethnic Similarity

_____

Chair: Nyla Branscombe

Date Approved: 7 May 2019

Abstract

Across four studies, we examined the implications of shifting racial designation of Arab Americans. The studies primarily concerned multiple factors influencing the ways that Arab and European Americans respond to categorization of Arabs as White (or not). Study 1 (N = 1,001) showed that Arab Americans were more likely to identify as *Other* (vs. White, their legal racial category) the more they reported discrimination, the darker their skin, and if they were Muslim (vs. Christian). Study 2 (N = 90), with an Arab American college student sample, showed that higher American identification predicted perceived subgroup respect when participants could self-categorize as "Middle Eastern or North African" (vs. when such an option was unavailable). Studies 3 and 4 addressed the question of ambiguous Arab racial categorization among White participants. Study 3 showed that cultural and biological definitions of race moderated participants' likelihood of considering an Arab as similar to their own group: cultural essentialism negatively predicted Whites' perception of Arabs as similar, particularly when told that Arabs are categorized as White (vs. categorized as MENA); in contrast, biological essentialism positively predicted perceived similarity when Arabs were categorized as White and negatively when Arabs were categorized as MENA. In Study 4, participants generally supported categorizing Arabs as MENA rather than White, and perceived similarity qualified this effect: similarity was positively related to support for a policy that categorized Arabs as White, but negatively related to support for a policy that categorized Arabs as MENA. Beyond perceptions of outgroups and racism per se, this investigation of race and racial categories benefits from a dialectic study of how the constructed nature of racial categories influences perceptions of self and (negotiable) others.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to the intellectual mentorship I have received from several faculty members. Thank you to Dr. Ludwin Molina for being so kind to all of the students and for teaching me how to study ethnic intergroup relations in the U.S. Thank you to Dr. Glenn Adams for facilitating a deeply transformative intellectual tradition within the program and for your constant support to students. And thank you to Dr. Nyla Branscombe, a most deserving recipient of university-level advising awards. I'm lucky to be able to work with someone so esteemed in the discipline. I never once felt I could not get your feedback within an inappropriately short turnaround.

Grad school would not have been the same without some special friends. Thank you, Justin, for somehow feeling like both a younger and older brother, you taught me more than you know. Thank you, Tasha, for being so brilliant, and for somehow finding time to hold the department together too. Thanks, Nur, for rides to happy hour that symbolized the ease you gave to grad school while you were here. And I could not have had dreamed of better cohort mates. Thank you, Sara, for choosing KU and letting us learn from you constantly. And thanks to Xian—if I could, I might actually do another year of grad school if we could do it together.

Thank you habibi Gallal. There's no one like you, thank you for your smile and know-how and for being my jumuah buddy. I'll always leave the gap in front of us open to someone else so I can stay next to you.

Thank you 3aroosty Houda. You made the past few years a life, and not just grad school. If not for you, KU and Lawrence wouldn't even be the same. I'll miss it because we were here together.

Thank you mama and baba for your support. We haven't made it easy on you but we hope you realize how blessed we are because of the life you created for us.

This dissertation is dedicated to the Syrian family that I barely know and who barely know me. I write this in an air-conditioned office, while in Damascus, families are struggling for basic necessities. This dissertation comes from a life thinking about you and why I am here and not there, and how we are still connected.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction

Each decade, the United States reimagines how to racially and ethnically classify its citizens. It is probably safe to assume that U.S. residents are classifying themselves on the basis of their "color or race" more than every ten years given the frequency with which other institutions, including education and workplace settings, collect such information. An overview of the country's ever evolving classifications—the inclusion in 1870 of a separate "Chinese" description, the inclusion of Spanish/Hispanic origin beginning in 1980, allowing for the option to self-identify with the 2000 census—all reveal the constant tension inherent in reifying a concept mixed with historical, social, and physical features (see Begley, 2016).

The case of Arabs/Arab Americans offers a timely illumination on how the subjective meaning imbued in the common, seemingly predictable task of racial self-categorization leads to potential contradictions. On standard demographic forms, such as the U.S. Census, citizens with Arab heritage have a clear designation: White racial identity includes any person "having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa." Thus, a seventh-generation American with roots in what are today Germany and Sweden, a first-generation immigrant from Lebanon, and a second-generation Algerian American would all be categorized as White[1].

How would individuals with each of these backgrounds respond to their joint inclusion in a single racial category, and what would their reactions teach us about the construction of racial-ethnic groups in the U.S.? This question is particularly salient given the evidence of malleability in the definition of racial groups. Historically, some marginalized groups (e.g. Irish and Jewish

[1] The U.S. Census allows for respondents to provide their own racial/ethnic label. Later, if a respondent of Arab descent uses this option to indicate their self-categorization as Arab or as an American with heritage in a specific Arab country, the U.S. Census reclassifies them as White.

immigrants) could eventually be embraced as White (Roediger, 1991). Would Americans of Arab and European heritage today prefer this flexibility to apply to their own shared legal category? To answer these questions, we apply a social identity approach to understanding fluid racial categories and examine the ways that Arab and White Americans respond to the tenuous meaning of their racial categorizations.

A social identity approach to race labels and categorization

The social identity approach (SIA) posits that belonging to and identifying with groups are fundamental pillars in the development of a social self (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). People intuitively understand themselves on the basis of meaningful differences in outcomes that occur based on shared characteristics that are foregrounded by particular social ecologies. Anthropologists point out that differences in geographic origin and phenotype are not named and established as the basis of 'race' until a meaningful (re-)organization of social life necessitates it. The historical trajectory of the Black-White dichotomy demonstrates this concept. Whereas West Africans may have locally understood themselves on the basis of a local tribal membership, in their forced migration to North America, their enslavement and bondage by Europeans created over time a new inclusive category of Black African slaves, where tribal group is less relevant (Fields & Fields, 2012). Thus, social identity can explain why members of separate tribes may have sparred for resources on the African continent but would later, reflecting the intergroup context, see themselves as members of a single group in resisting against the newly constructed White American. Importantly, such a group would exist not only practically, but socially as well, such that they might even begin to understand themselves as black. Evidence for this process occurring recently was shown among college students from 32 different countries, for whom perceived

discrimination predicted identification with other international students, but not with their national group (Schmitt, Spears, & Branscombe, 2003).

Later work with the SIA established that identifying with important groups not only reflects social reality but also serves as a meaningful source of self. A vast literature has established that identifying with meaningful groups is good for people. For one, identifying with groups is a source of self-esteem (Jetten et. al., 2015). Recent research has shown that, in addition to making people feel good, identifying with groups provides people with a sense of control in their lives (Greenaway et. al., 2015).

The implications of identification for well-being are especially meaningful in the case of racial-ethnic minorities, whose groups are often stigmatized. In the sample of international students, the increased identification with other international students positively predicted self-esteem (Schmitt, Spears, & Branscombe). This work on the rejection-identification model shows that experiencing discrimination promotes identification with the targeted group, and this increased identification buffers some of the harm of experiencing discrimination (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999). This model replicated in a representative sample of Muslim and Christian Arab Americans (Hakim, Molina, & Branscombe, 2017).

Self-categorization builds from the initial premises of social identity to argue that in addition to producing the groups themselves as a basis for self-construction, the social context also influences with which of multiple groups an individual will self-categorize. Of course, people of certain racial-ethnic groups are also shaped by gender, nationality, religion, and so on. This literature has been especially productive and relevant in understanding the ways in which people shift between subordinate and superordinate categorizations. A relevant example is nation (superordinate) and race/ethnicity (subordinate). Self-categorization theory argues that these

overlapping identities are variably salient depending on the social context. Generally, discrimination would lead to stronger identification with the targeted group, whereas participating in a national election would lead to stronger identification with the superordinate group.

Many modern nation-states with histories of immigration manage cultural diversity by affirming the existence of different racial-ethnic subgroups as equally important to the multicultural environment (Sears, Henry, & Kosterman, 2000). Subgroup respect captures this perception among ethnic/racial minorities, that their subgroup is affirmed or valued within broader society (Huo & Molina, 2006). According to this perspective, acknowledgment and appreciation of subgroups, rather than erasure, leads to stronger identification with the common group (such as a school or a country) among subgroup members (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). This acknowledgement is communicated through interpersonal interactions as well as institutional patterns, of which the census form is a primary example.

Put differently, relevance of the social identity approach to the present research rests on the assumption that the act of racial labeling is determined by and expressed within social contexts, and thus varies depending on socially relevant factors. Combined with the fact that such identification is a source of well-being and resilience among marginalized groups, we argue that the mere act of self-categorization on a form has potentially important consequences for Arab Americans, whose proper location in such labeling forms is ambiguous, and for European Americans, whose conception of the White racial group may be compromised with the inclusion of Arabs.

One important hypothesis derived from self-categorization theory is that the practical ambiguity of Arab racial-ethnic location is interpreted based on perceptions of fit. Social identity

theorists articulate two forms of fit in the categorization process, comparative and normative (Haslam et. al., 2010). *Comparative fit* pertains to the outcome of a perceptual process called *meta-contrast,* whereby one is more likely to categorize as part of a group if they see less differences within said group than they see differences between said group and another group (Turner, 1985). For instance, a person of multiracial background would be more likely to identify as multiracial (and not with a single specific racial group) when the amount of similarity they share in some domain—e.g. the experience of being ambiguous in the eyes of perceivers—is greater within the multiracial category than between distinct racial categories. Thus, intergroup contexts will promote identification with groups more than intragroup contexts will (Haslam et. al., 2010).

Perhaps more relevant to the present research on Arab-White distinctions is normative fit. *Normative fit* refers to the *content* that defines the group (Haslam et. al., 2010). That is, beyond the existence of difference between groups, normative fit refers to the nature of such differences, from which people build shared expectations of what characteristics a person must hold to be part of a certain category.

More specifically applied to the present case, to the extent that Arabs perceive themselves and are perceived as violating a normative understanding of what it means to be White, they should self-categorize (or *be* categorized) as part of a separate group (Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). Thus, the central hypothesis underlying the present work is that the more evidence from an Arab American's experience that is incompatible with the content of White racial identity—e.g. lighter complexion, or sharing characteristics typically associated with White privilege—the more likely they are to categorize as something else. Similarly, a White

American's categorization of an Arab American is determined by the perception of an Arab as fitting the normative definition of what it means to be White in America.

Context and racial categorization

Understanding the ambiguity of Arab American racial/ethnic meaning benefits from examination of similar categorization and labeling processes of other groups. Latinx identity shares many parallels to Arab American identity in that both can be legally classified as White yet often practically live as part of a racialized non-White group. Indeed, the U.S. Census (as of 2010) explicitly considers Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin as an ethnicity which can co-occur with Whiteness. Several predictors of identifying as a minority or as not White among Latinx participants include darker skin (Wilton, Sanchez, & Chavez, 2013; Vargas, 2015), greater Spanish fluency (Sanchez, Chavez, Good, Wilton, 2012; Wilton, Sanchez et. al., 2013) and higher socioeconomic status (Vargas, 2015).

More research exists on the predictors of racial self-categorization among multiracials. Much of this research generalizes the findings among Latinx participants. For instance, darker skin predicts categorization as Black among Black-White biracials (Brunsma & Rockquemore, 2001) and among all multiracials, categorization as White correlates positively with social class (Davenport, 2016). This literature has also demonstrated the role of ecological factors in predicting racial categorization. For instance, in one study, multiracial adolescents were more likely to write in as "Other" if they attended a predominantly minority-serving school (Harris, Ravert, & Sullivan, 2017).

While the literature reviewed immediately above explores *how* individuals categorize, further literature explores the likelihood that individuals *change* how they categorize. For instance, some adolescents racially self-categorized differently depending on the presence of a

parent or guardian (Harris & Sim, 2002), and children of immigrants were more likely to shift racial self-categorization with increased family cohesion (Mowen & Stansfield, 2016). Interestingly, one study found that multiracial adolescents who shifted from a categorization with one group to categorization with multiple groups seven years later were less likely to report poor health (Tabb, 2016).

While the results from the reviewed primary literature above is rooted in the social identity approach to varying degrees, in concert they clearly point to one of the approach's core themes: Identification with even seemingly static group categories like race is responsive to variations in context. Next, a brief overview of the historical shifts in Arab American racial/ethnic positioning will situate the previous discussion on context and race categorization within this paper's group of interest.

Tracing Arab American race/ethnicity in the U.S. over time

The earliest Arabic-speaking immigrants to the U.S. preferred legal categorization as White. Their efforts relied on cultural evidence that they could adequately perform whiteness in the U.S. For one, the majority of immigrants were Christian, providing a sense of shared heritage in their new host communities throughout the U.S. (Naff, 1985). In addition, in their legal struggle to naturalize as citizens, these immigrants pointed to their economic self-sufficiency and origins in the birthplace of Western civilization (Gualtieri, 2009). Those among this first wave beginning at the turn of the 20th century were predominantly from the Mount Lebanon region, in what was then referred to as Syria (which today would encompass the countries of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel/Palestine).

Racial/ethnic categorization of these arrivals was muddled by the fact that these lands were provinces in the Ottoman Empire, leading to their lumped grouping as "Turks" with various

Arabs as well as with Greeks, Albanians, and Armenians (Naber, 2000). Eventually, they were referred to colloquially and in print media as "Syrians." Importantly, however, while these immigrants maintained social and cultural connections to their Syrian heritage, the majority willingly preferred assimilation into mainstream White U.S. (Suleiman & Abu-Laban, 1989).

Given the prevalence of legal racial discrimination, these Syrians sought to formally assert their whiteness through the courts. This was especially important given the restriction of citizenship. One South Carolina judge wrote in 1914 that though Syrians may be considered Caucasian given their geographic origins, they were not meant to be included among the group of free white persons to whom the privilege of citizenship was reserved, arguing that this designation referred only to those of European descent (Samhan, 1994). Eventually, by the 1950s, Arabs had won legal recognition as White and psychologically self-categorized as such (Suleiman & Abu-Laban, 1989; Samhan, 1994).

This social and self-categorization of Arabs began to shift away from White with the second and third waves of Arab immigration. The second wave coincided with the end of the second World War, when Arabs previously living under Ottoman then European rule began (European-prescribed) forms of self-governance. Thus, many of the Arab immigrants at this time brought with them stronger national attachments compared to their predecessors who brought only very localized forms of identity (Naber, 2000). Many more Muslims also participated in this wave of immigration.

Many scholars agree that identification as "Arab" began with the third wave of immigration. With new legislation lifting limitation of geographic restrictions, these immigrants were much more diverse in their national and religious origins. These immigrants replaced the civic identification with the U.S. of their predecessors with a pan-Arab consciousness, especially

in response to growing anti-Arab sentiment with the onset of the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. For these more recently arrived Arabs, the strong U.S. antagonism against the Arab side of the conflict summarized a hostile orientation that was manifest in media portrayals of Arabs as an enemy of the West. Similar to other groups responding to subordination, many Arabs thus adopted a *strategic essentialism* whereby the previously unwelcome conflation of their diversity by the public would be embraced and rearticulated for the sake of political struggle (Gualtieri, 2009; Spivak, 1988).

Thus, while Arab Americans originally fought for a place in the White racial category, today, Arab Americans find themselves in a society that ostensibly values racial/ethnic diversity but that in reality harms Arab Americans in many ways. Such harm has occurred through, for instance, pervasive social representations of Arabs as patriarchal violent extremists (Shaheen, 2003) and public support for extra security measures for Arabs and Muslims (Cainkar, 2009; Huddy, Khatib, & Capelos, 2002). From a SIA perspective, such evidence from an Arab American's experience would indicate that they belong to a group distinct from that of a White American.

Indeed, one study among Arab Muslims in Metropolitan Chicago found that 63% believed that Arabs were not White (Cainkar, 2008). In the same study, the majority of interviews participants made distinctions between their *de jure* and *de facto* racial identities. For instance, one participant lamented an employer's position that he could not be considered for affirmative action because "they said you will be considered White. But of course in real life we are not" (Cainkar, 2008, p. 62). In general, the Arab Muslim participants interpreted their marginalization into psychological identification as non-White. The present research sets out to

test the contextual and motivational factors determining the categorization of Arabs and Arab Americans at the edge of whiteness.

Study 1

The first study examined the factors influencing an Arab American's choice of racial self-categorization as "White" or "Other". Specifically, a cross-sectional approach using the regularly-occurring race categories provided by the Census in combination with several social-psychological factors would allow us to predict the likelihood that an Arab American would self-categorize as White or choose another category[2]. Based on the previous discussion on the role of normative fit, social context, and racial categorization, Study 1 tests the hypothesis that Arab Americans are more likely to self-categorize as non-White the more they identify with another group and the more they experience forms of racialized marginalization.

Method

Participants. We conducted secondary analyses on data obtained from a representative sample of Arab Americans living in the metropolitan area of Detroit, MI in 2003. The original purpose of the study, carried out by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan, was to examine Arab American experiences post-9/11 (see Baker et al., 2006). The original survey assessed variables relevant to the present investigation. Surveys were administered in-person[3].

Measures

Perceptions of discrimination. A composite measure included participants' responses to a) five "yes or no" questions probing experiences with interpersonal discrimination (e.g. verbal insult or loss of employment) and b) one item measuring the perception the U.S. media is biased

[2] Importantly, this study specifically recruited Arab American participants but was not presented as having any interest in how Arab Americans self-categorize.

[3] Arab Americans included in this study were recruited via area probability (i.e., family names) and using lists provided by local Arab American organizations.

against Arab Americans (1 = *biased in favor*, 4 = *biased against*). Responses to these items were standardized and averaged.

Subgroup respect. One item, "Arab Americans are not respected by broader American society" (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). This item was reverse-scored so that higher scores indicated more perceived respect towards Arab Americans.

Arab American identification. One item, "I identify with other Arab Americans," (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), assessed identification This item very closely resembles a validated single-item measure of social identification (Postmes, Haslam, & Jans, 2013).

American identification. Two items: "I feel at home in America" (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) and "I'm proud to be an American" (1 = *not at all proud*, 5 = *very proud*) were averaged, $r = .26$.

Complexion. An admittedly unusual measure, survey administrators rated each individual's complexion on a scale from 1 (*very light*) to 5 (*very dark*).

Religion. Participants indicated their religious background, if any. The majority of the sample, consistent with the national Arab American population, was Christian (57%, coded as 0). Forty-two percent of the sample was Muslim (coded as 1). I excluded 15 participants who identified with a third or no religion at all.

Race. Participants self-categorized in terms of race using the racial categories designated by the U.S. Census with the important inclusion to self-categorize as "Other" (coding strategy discussed below).

Demographics. We also took into account participant sex, age, and socioeconomic status.

Results

Our primary interest was in predicting the racial self-categorization of the participants. Table 1 below lists, in decreasing order, the frequency with which each racial category was chosen by the 1,001 included participants.

Table 1. *Frequencies of Racial Self-Categorization*

Racial self-categorization	N	% of total
White	655	65.34
Other	294	29.37
Asian	43	4.30
Black, African American, or Negro	1	.001
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	.001

About two-thirds of the sample self-categorized correctly based on the U.S. Census definition of the White racial category. Seen differently, about one-third of the sample chose to identify with some category other than that within which they are legally defined, mostly choosing a nonspecific "Other" category. What social psychological factors might be behind the different choices to self-categorize, when everyone in the sample is legally part of the same race?

Predicting likelihood to identify as "Other"

Our primary analysis used the available, theoretically relevant, social psychological variables as predictors of the self-categorization decision. For conceptual and statistical clarity, we re-coded the self-categorization choices as either White or Other, thus collapsing all of the categories other than White into a single category to create a dichotomous outcome. Though there is surely valuable insight to be gained from understanding why someone would choose to identify as Asian (or African) rather than Other, there is not enough variability to quantitatively study these likelihoods. More importantly, conceptually, we see enough overlap between the non-White categories because what matters about the decision for the present study is not what

particular categories the participants move *towards* but rather the choice at all to move *from* the White racial category.

With a dichotomous outcome, we submitted our important variables to a logistic regression whereby racial self-categorization (0 = White, 1 = Other) was regressed on the demographic variables, American identification, Arab American identification, perceptions of discrimination, complexion, and religious group membership. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Logistic Regression Predicting Likelihood to Self-Categorize as *Other* (vs. White)

Predictor	Estimate	*SE*	*p*	Odds
Age	-0.02	0.01	0.01	.98
Sex	-0.01	0.01	0.93	0.99
Political orientation	0.09	0.08	0.29	1.09
American identification	-0.00	0.16	0.99	1.00
Arab American identification	0.19	0.11	0.08	1.21
Discrimination	0.30	0.14	0.04	1.35
Complexion	0.54	0.12	< .001	1.72
Religion (0 = Christian, 1 = Muslim)	0.89	0.19	< .001	2.46

Note: Odds column shows values indicating that likelihood that, with every unit increase of the variable and all else being equal, the participant would identify as Other.

The strongest predictor of increased likelihood to identify as Other was religious background, with Muslim Arab Americans being almost 2.5 times as likely as Christian Arab Americans. Ethnic identification with other Arab Americans emerged as only a marginal predictor of increased likelihood, and American identification was unrelated to increased likelihood. In addition, more experiences of discrimination was positively associated with increased likelihood; for every unit increase in experiences of discrimination, participants were

1.35 times more likely to identify as "Other." In addition, complexion was positively associated with increased likelihood; with every unit increase in skin tone darkness, participants were 1.72 times more likely to identify as Other. Age also emerged as a significant negative predictor or likelihood, indicating older participants were less likely to identify as "Other," however the magnitude of the estimate and odds ratio are quite small as to be negligible.

Discussion

This study measured racial self-categorization at the end of the survey with categories nearly identical to those used by the U.S. Census. Importantly, however, though the legal definition of White was available to participants, participants could also identify as "Other" and choose their own racial self-categorization. About one-third of the sample chose to identify as something other White (mostly as "Other," but also some as Asian), providing variability to explore predictive factors in racial self-categorization.

In line with self-categorization hypothesis, the predictors that emerged as significant captured important aspects of lay perceptions of racial categories, social treatment, and symbolic belonging. One interpretation of experiences and perceptions of discrimination are as indicators of belonging and social position. In other words, White Americans of European heritage have historically wielded power in U.S. society and are not typically the victims of racial discrimination. That an Arab American would perceive and experience discrimination would, thus, be an indication that they are *not* truly a member of the White racial group, leading to increased likelihood to identify as "Other." However, the present design cannot eliminate the reverse explanation that an Arab American's inclination to identify as "Other" would promote greater awareness of discrimination.

Above and beyond the experiences of discrimination, Muslims were significantly more likely than Christians to identify as Other. In this sample, Muslims reported higher levels of discrimination, and there may be other factors associated with Muslim heritage that lead to increased identification away from White. One explanation is historical, that Christian Arab Americans have a more established presence and an easier integration into broader U.S. society given their shared religious identification with the traditional normative religious heritage in the U.S. (Gualtieri, 2009). Relatedly, throughout their histories of immigration and especially at the time of data collection in post 9/11 America, Muslim Arab Americans were the targets of scrutiny that belied the public's perception of this group as an outsider until proven otherwise (Detroit Arab American Study Team, 2009), which these participants may internalize and reflect onto the self-categorization task by indicating they do not at all feel they are considered White within their national context.

Of note is that the complexion variable was researcher-reported rather than self-reported, meaning that its significance as a predictor is not an indication of participants' lay perceptions about prototypical racial phenotypes per se, but rather that perhaps another aspect of social experience beyond religious group membership and discrimination is not being captured among the present variables. It may simply be that, by Americans' normative definition of whiteness, darker skin would lower the fit of an Arab target within the White category.

Study 2

Study 2 varied the racial self-categorizations of Arab Americans by experimentally manipulating the available groups with which participants could identify. Instead of measuring how experiences predict the likelihood to racially self-categorize in different ways, the present study asks how the racial categorization of a group can influence those same perceptions about a group's standing in society. Indeed, from a SCT perspective, self-categorization can dynamically shift such that the consequences of social categorization are also the predictors of categorizing in a certain way (Good, Chavez, & Sanchez, 2010).

More specifically, in Study 2 Arab American participants would be either prevented from identifying as anything but White or be given the opportunity to identify with a commonly proposed, more specific ethnic categorization. We were interested in testing whether the seemingly benign task of clicking a checkbox in a certain way (or simply its actual availability to do so) communicates to the participant something about how their group is perceived by society. Thus Study 2 tests the hypothesis that, to the extent that a demographic form is a manifestation of a broader public perception of the group's standing, participants who could self-identify as Arab rather than White would report higher levels of subgroup respect and American identification. Conversely, participants who do not identify with White Americans yet must indicate their belonging to said group would be more likely to later express exaggerated levels of Arab identification and perceptions of discrimination. Study 2 also tests the possibility that such meanings conveyed by a demographic form may be more meaningful to participants based on social identification with the national group which the different racial/ethnic groups share.

Importantly, unlike in Study 1, perceptions of discrimination and subgroup respect would be measured independently. We presumed that a demographic form would for participants

present an indication that their group is acknowledged as part of the multiethnic U.S. society, yet its absence would not be an instance of explicit negation or discrimination. We thus proposed it would be important to isolate these perceptions about the group's place in society.

Method

***Participants*.** Participants were undergraduate and graduate students recruited from Arab/Arab American student organizations at a large Midwestern university. After initial outreach and approval from group leaders, participants were encouraged to invite other students who would be eligible to participate. The final sample included 90 participants (M_{age} = 20.25), of whom 52.22% identified as women or female and 51.11% as coming from a Muslim background.

Ethnic identity manipulation. To mirror typical demographic questionnaires, and to avoid arousing suspicion with a stand-alone race/ethnicity question, the first page of the online survey asked participants to indicate their citizenship and then their race/ethnicity. After clicking an option to indicate citizenship, participants were randomly assigned to self-categorize using one of two sets of response options. In the *White categorization* condition, participants chose from the six racial groups recognized on the 2010 U.S. Census (presented in alphabetical order): American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic/Latino; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; or White. In the *MENA categorization* condition, participants responded to the same list, with the addition of a *Middle Eastern or North African* option in the appropriate alphabetical position.

Measures. The remainder of the experiment was identical for participants in both conditions. For all dependent measures, participants responded to scales ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree)* to 7 (*Strongly Agree*).

Subgroup respect. Three items assessed the extent to which participants felt thatAmericans respected Arabs as a group: "Most Americans respect what Arab Americans have accomplished in life," "Most Americans value the opinions and ideas of most Arab Americans," "Most Americans approve of how most Arab Americans live their lives," $\alpha = .85$.

American identification. Three items assessed the extent to which participants identified with other Americans: "I identify with Americans," "Being an American is an important part of how I see myself," "I am glad to be an American," $\alpha = .82$.

Arab identification. Three items, identical to those used to measure American identification, assessed the extent to which participants identified with other Arab Americans, $\alpha = .93$.

Perceptions of discrimination. Two items assessed the extent to which participants perceived Arab Americans as targets of discrimination in the U.S.: "Arab Americans as a group have been the victims of racism in broader Americans society," "Prejudice and discrimination against Arab Americans exists today," $\alpha = .91$.

Results

We conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the categorization manipulation as the independent variable, and with subgroup respect, American identification, Arab American identification, and perceptions of discrimination as the dependent variables. The multivariate analysis showed no significant effect of the manipulation on any of the dependent

variables, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.98$, $F(4, 83) = .21$, $p = .93$. Table 3 presents the means and correlations between all the variables.

Table 3. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables in Study 1.*

			Correlations			
	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4
(1) Subgroup respect	2.75	1.20	--			
(2) American identification	4.81	1.41	0.32*	--		
(3) Arab American identification	6.33	1.03	0.12	0.31**	--	
(4) Perceptions of discrimination	6.28	1.00	-0.14	-0.05	0.30**	--

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

We observed a ceiling effect for our measure of Arab American identification, and a paired-samples t-test showed that participants identified stronger with Arab Americans than with Americans as a national group, $t(88) = 9.80$, $p < .001$.

Since we observed no main effect consistent with the primary hypothesis—that an inclusive census form communicates greater respect—we next tested for the possibility of an interaction in predicting subgroup respect. Specifically, given the significant positive correlation between American identification and subgroup respect, we tested if the effect of the manipulation was significant for participants who highly identified as Americans. It may be the case that the effect of the manipulation depends on the meaningfulness of subgroup racial categorization process, which may vary depending on superordinate identification. We thus conducted multiple regression analyses with the categorization manipulation, American identification, and their interaction as simultaneous predictors of subgroup respect.

Consistent with the correlational analyses, the main effect of American identification was significant, $\beta = .43$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$, and this effect was qualified by the Categorization manipulation × American identification interaction, $\beta = -.37$, $SE = .17$, $p = .03$. Simple slope

analyses indicated that among participants in the *White categorization* condition, American identification did not predict subgroup respect, $\beta = .06$, $SE = .12$, $p = .65$. Conversely, for participants in the *MENA categorization* condition, greater American identification predicted perceived subgroup respect, $\beta = .43$, $SE = .12$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 1).

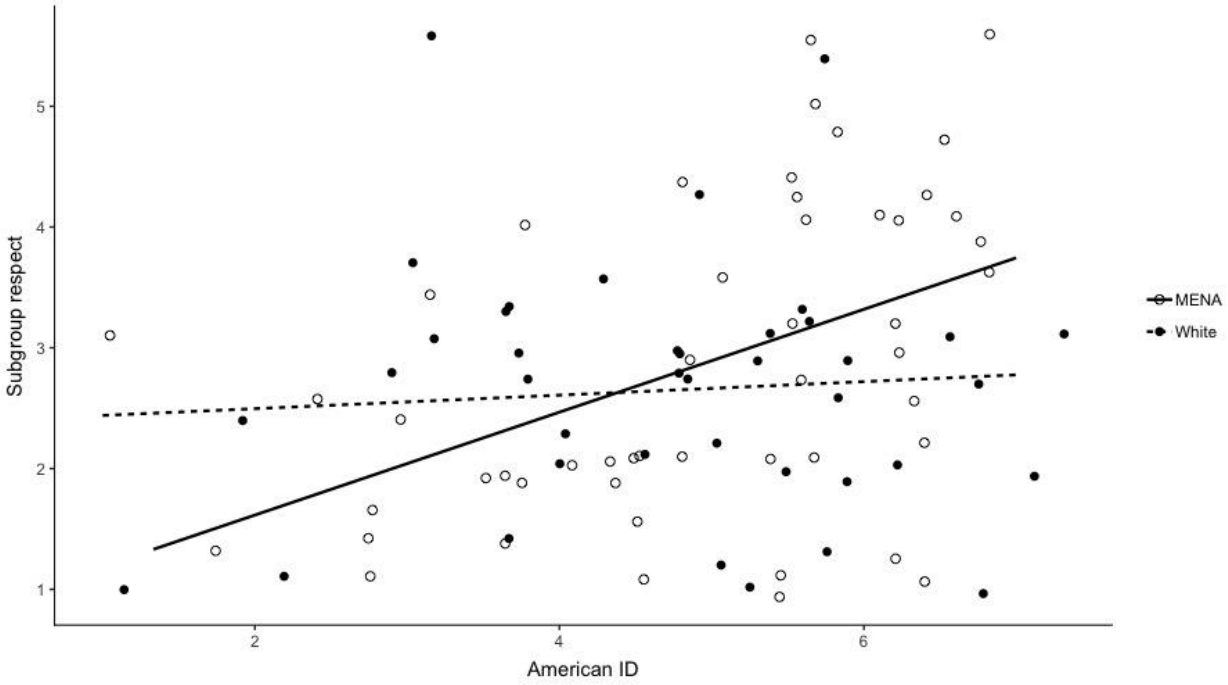

Figure 1. The interactive effect between American identification and the categorization manipulation on subgroup respect.

Discussion

What does it mean for a group with a poorly-fitting racial/ethnic definition to self-categorize in a more fitting way? On its own, the manipulation of alternative racial categorization options for Arab American participants may have been too subtle to influence perceptions of subgroup respect, American or Arab American identification, or perceptions of discrimination.

We were most interested in exploring what a demographic form communicates about the extent to which a group is recognized and respected by broader society. To this end, the

interaction effect is telling in its indication that the meaning of the possible categorization options is interpreted differently based on identification with the superordinate group. Specifically, the presence of the MENA category was especially indicative of subgroup respect for those Arabs who strongly identified as American; there was no such association for the participants only given the option to identify as White. A compatible, additional interpretation can be offered with respect to the low-identified Americans expressing less subgroup respect. It may be that lower American identification overlaps with low Arab American identification (as indicated with the bivariate correlations), and thus the option to identify as MENA is not as meaningful. More tentatively, low American identification may belie a distrust of the racial categorization process, such that for these participants, the option to identify as MENA is especially unwelcome given its potential use for, among other purposes, governmental surveillance. For instance, though they are eventually categorized as White, respondents of Arab descent can write-in another racial/ethnic designation such as a nation of origin or simply 'Arab.' Interestingly, details gleaned from self-identified Arab respondents during the 2000 Census was shared in response to a request from the Department of Homeland Security (Clemetson, 2004).

These results should be generalized to the broader Arab American community with caution. This was a highly-identified Arab American sample, and this sample almost unanimously agreed in their perception that the group is discriminated against. We thus could not explore many condition-level effects in the absence of much variability within these variables. In Study 1, for instance, a more representative sample of Arab American participants reported much more variability in identification (both ethnic and national) and perceptions of discrimination; Study 1 participants also reported equally high levels of American and Arab American

identification, whereas this sample identified significantly stronger with Arab Americans than with the superordinate American group, perhaps evidence of a more politicized minority identity.

Results from the first two studies generally supported the hypotheses that Arab American racial self-categorization depends upon psychological and experiential factors and not merely upon a recognition of how the state categorizes members of their group. Study 1 showed that Arabs are more likely to categorize as non-White if they experience discrimination, are Muslim, and have darker skin. Study 2 also demonstrated the affective component of the simple categorization task: Arab Americans who identified strongly with the superordinate American group perceived greater subgroup respect if they could self-categorize as MENA.

The next two studies maintain the focus on Arab American categorization while turning the questions to European American perceivers. That is, for White Americans, what factors make the categorization of Arab Americans more than just a reflection of institutional definitions?

Study 3

Study 3 applies an analogous paradigm to what was applied in Study 2, whereby participants are exposed to either one of two racial categorizations of Americans of Arab descent. In this case, we explore the consequences for White participants who learn that Arabs are either categorized as White (i.e., included in their category) or as MENA (i.e., distinct and separate category). In addition, similar to Study 2, the present study explores the role of potential moderating variables in determining the effect of such a manipulation.

Given the malleability of Arab racial categorization to which participants will be exposed in this study, attention should be paid to how underlying beliefs about the meaning of race and racial groups relates to membership. One area of research has demonstrated the role of *essentialist beliefs* in determining attitudes about racial groups. Racial essentialism refers to understandings of racial group members as sharing an inherent, immutable, and informative underlying nature (Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2002).

In the present studies, White participants may be more or less likely to see Arabs as belonging to their group depending on the extent of their essentialist beliefs about race. Past research has shown essentialism, variably defined, to be positively related to prejudice and acquiescence to an inequitable status quo. For instance, priming of essentialism among non-Black participants led to greater acceptance of racial inequality, even while controlling for importantly modern racist beliefs (Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). Another study among White participants found that essentialism predicted categorization of Black-White biracial persons based on hypodescent, but only among those with dispositional anti-Black bias (Ho, Roberts, & Gelman, 2015). Another set of studies that measures multiple forms of essentialism among

White participants showed that only the *behavioral* and not the *physiological* form to be related to prejudice against African Americans (Andreychik & Gill, 2015).

It is useful to clarify the relationship among these various terms that describe essentialist beliefs. In general, definitions of essentialism differ in the ways that an underlying essence manifests in a particular group. Perhaps most commonly, racial essentialism locates this underlying, shared essence in biology and genetics that manifests in observable physical traits, Terms like *natural kind* (Morton, Hornsey, & Postmes, 2009) and *bio-somatic* (Andreychik & Gill, 2015), as would the measure created by Williams and Eberhardt (2008), would fall within this conceptualization of essentialism as a shared essence that is understood through and manifests in phenotypes.

In contrast, the other common conceptualization of essentialism presumes a shared underlying nature that is identifiable and definable in terms of shared practices and values rather than in shared genetic heritage (Soylu Yalcinkaya, Estrada-Villalta, & Adams, 2017). This conceptualization is captured in terms such as *reification* (Morton, Hornsey, & Postmes, 2009) and *bio-behavioral* (Andreychik & Gill, 2015).

Despite these consistent conceptual distinctions in the literature amidst the varying terminology, some results are still difficult to reconcile. For instance, Williams and Eberhardt's (2008) positive link between essentialism and prejudice emerged with a biological measure, but no link emerged with Andreychik and Gill's (2015) bio-somatic measure. Given some of these contradictory findings, and given that we were interested in an outcome distinct from that regularly assessed in this area (prejudice), the present study had no a priori predictions on the relationship between biological essentialism and the perception, among Whites, that Whites and Arabs are similar. However, we did ensure to measure both forms of essentialism separately

using established items. In the present study, we used the measures established by Soylu Yalcinkaya, Estrada-Villalta, and Adams (2017) that distinguish between *biological* and *cultural* essentialism.

Method

Participants. Participants were U.S. adults recruited via Turk Prime Panels. Inclusion criteria include being White (and of non-Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin). The final sample included 205 participants (M_{age} = 43.36 years) of whom 56.58% identified as female and who earned $1.00 US in exchange for their completion of the approximately 10-minute experiment.

Manipulation of Arab categorization. Prior to the manipulation, participants completed the same three-item measure of American identification (α = .85) as used in Study 2. Next, participants were briefed on the purpose and nature of the U.S. Census. This served as a foundation for a transition to introduce the topic of racial categorization. Specifically, participants were told that the U.S. Census Bureau "responds to changing demographics and civilian requests to update the racial category options." The ostensible purpose of the study was to study people's knowledge of these categories in the past and present.

On the next pages, participants viewed images of five individuals drawn from the Chicago Face Database (Ma, Correll, & Wittenbrink, 2015). Importantly, these high-resolution images include faces of individuals of varying ethnicity, with standardized expressions, and against identical backgrounds. The database includes Asian, Black, Latino, and White male and female targets. The Asian category is broadly defined (i.e. not strictly East Asian) as evidenced by the inclusion of individuals of apparent South Asian & Middle Eastern descent.

All participants viewed an image of, in order and on separate pages, a White female, East Asian male, African American female, White male, and Middle Eastern male. During the first

half of the image presentations, each individual's picture was accompanied by a fictional name and an explicit mention and definition of the race within which they are categorized. For example, accompanying the image of the African American female was a name (Brianna Ford) and the statement, "This resident is recorded as Black or African American (a racial group of people with origins in Africa, see image below).

Brianna Ford

This resident is recorded as **Black or African American** (a racial group of people with origins in Africa)

→

In the *Arab = White* condition, the *White* category was defined as "a racial group with origins in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa" (the current legal definition). This definition was applied when participants viewed the White male and the Middle Eastern male.

In the *Arab = MENA* condition, the *White* category was defined as a "racial group with origins in Europe." In this condition, a new category was created for the Middle Eastern male who was described as being recorded as *Middle Eastern/North African* (a racial group of people with origins in the Middle East and North Africa).

To strengthen the effect of the manipulation, participants were re-presented with the same five images and the accompanying names, and were this time tasked with identifying the racial categorization of the target based on the group memberships provided during the first half. In both conditions, the order of images in this categorization task were slightly adjusted to, in order, the Asian male, the White female, the African American female, the Middle Eastern male, and the White male.

In the *Arab = White* condition, the options to categorize the individual would include *White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian,* and *Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*.

In the *Arab = MENA* condition, the options would be identical with the addition of a *Middle Eastern/North African* category, which fell second-to-last between *Asian* and *Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*. Taken as a whole, the manipulation consistently applied a certain set of labels to targets and asked the participants to immediately thereafter apply those labels to the same targets (see Table 4 below for comparison of conditions).

Image of Yasser Al-Khafagi

Table 4. *Examples of Categorization Manipulation, Study 3.*

	Condition	
	Arab = White	*Arab = MENA*
First presentation	Yasser Al-Khafagi This resident is recorded as White (a racial group of people with origins in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa)	Yasser Al-Khafagi This resident is recorded as Middle Eastern/North African (a racial group of people with origins in the Middle East and North Africa)
Second presentation	Yasser Al-Khafagi According to the U.S. Census, to which racial group would this pers White Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Yasser Al-Khafagi According to the U.S. Census, to which racial group would this person belon White Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Middle Eastern/North African Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Measures. The rest of the experiment was identical for participants in both conditions. For all dependent measures, participants responded to scales ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree)* to 7 (*Strongly Agree*).

White racial identification. Following the manipulation, participants racially self-categorized from the same options provided in the target categorization task. All participants self-categorized as White. Next, participants responded to items adapted from two subscales of the Collective Self-Esteem measure (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Specifically, participants responded to items assessing private regard (e.g. In general, I'm glad to be a member of my racial group") and identity relevance (e.g. "In general, belonging to my racial group is an important part of my self-image"). Items were averaged to create a composite of White racial identification ($\alpha = .80$).

Biological essentialism. Participants responded to four items assessing the extent to which they believed differences existed between racial groups and could be attributed to genes: "I think the chief reason why people of a particular race are so alike in their behavior is that they possess a shared genetic inheritance," "I think that differences between people of different races in behavior and personality are largely determined by genetic predisposition," I believe that many talents that individuals of a particular race possess can be attributed to genetic causes," and "I believe that many differences between humans of different skin color can be attributed to differences in genetic predispositions," $\alpha = .83$.

Cultural essentialism. On the same page, participants responded to five items assessing the extent to which they believed that racial groups have distinctive cultures that unavoidably define their members' socialization: "Growing up in a particular racial community will largely determine how a person behaves in social situations," "Different racial groups have

characteristically different lifestyles that distinguish them from other racial groups," It would be difficult for a person of one racial group to adopt the way of life of a different racial group," People learn the values and beliefs that are defining characteristics of their racial group," and "Every racial group has a distinctive culture of their own," $\alpha = .76$.

Perceived similarity. Three items assessed the extent to which participants perceived Arabs as similar to White Americans: "Arab Americans and White Americans are essentially the same," "There are few real differences between Arab Americans and White Americans," and "There will always be substantial differences between Arab Americans and White Americans," $\alpha = .82$.

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated their gender group identity, highest level of attained education (1 = *Grade school*, 5 = *Post-graduate training*), age, and political orientation (1 = *Very liberal*, 7 = *Very conservative*).

Results

We conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the categorization manipulation as the independent variable, and with White racial identification, biological essentialism, cultural essentialism, and similarity as the dependent variables. The multivariate analysis showed no significant effect of the manipulation on any of the dependent variables, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.99$, $F(1, 193) = .62$, $p = .65$. In Table 5, we thus present the means and correlations between all the variables across both conditions.

Table 5. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables in Study 3.*

			Correlations				
	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
(1) American identification	5.86	1.27	--	0.43**	0.19**	0.24**	-0.13
(2) White racial identity	4.50	1.05		--	0.32**	0.23**	-0.32**
(3) Biological essentialism	3.90	1.37			--	0.46**	-0.23**
(4) Cultural essentialism	4.57	1.06				--	-0.30**
(5) Similarity	3.51	1.42					--

** $p < .01$

Since we observed no main effect consistent with the primary hypotheses—that the categorization of Arabs as White would influence White racial identity, constructions of racial groups, and perceived similarity—we next tested for the possibility of an interaction in predicting the primary outcome, similarity.

Specifically, we ran hierarchical multiple regression models assessing the effects of the preceding variables on similarity. In the first step, similarity was regressed on the main effects of the manipulation, American identification, racial identity and both essentialism measures. In the second step, each of the interaction effects between the manipulation and the other variables were entered as simultaneous predictors.

Table 6. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results Predicting Perceived Similarity.*

Predictors	Estimate	SE	*p*
Political orientation	-0.02	0.06	0.71
Race condition:			
Arab = White – Arab = MENA	-0.14	0.18	0.44
American identification	0.11	0.11	0.29
White racial identification	-0.50*	0.14	< 0.001
Biological essentialism	-0.31	0.10	0.003
Cultural essentialism	-0.08	0.15	0.57
Race condition × American identification	-0.09	0.15	0.57
Race condition × White racial identification	0.19	0.20	0.36
Race condition × Biological essentialism	0.58*	0.16	< 0.001
Race condition × Cultural essentialism	-0.46*	0.20	0.02
R^2			0.20

The model revealed two main effects: Higher scores in racial identity centrality and biological essentialism were negatively related to perceptions that Arabs are similar to White Americans. The main effect of biological essentialism was qualified by an interaction with the race condition manipulation, and we also observed an interaction between cultural assimilation and the race condition manipulation. We used Preacher, Curran and Bauer's (2006) online tools to probe the two significant interactions.

Step two revealed a significant Race condition × Biological essentialism interaction, b = .55, SE = .16, p = .001. Simple slope analyses revealed that, among participants in the *Arab = White* condition, biological essentialism was positively associated with perceptions of similarity, b = .23, SE = .11, p = .04. In contrast, among participants in the *Arab = MENA* condition, biological essentialism was negatively associated with perceptions of similarity, b = -0.34, SE = .11, p = .0015. See *Figure 2*.

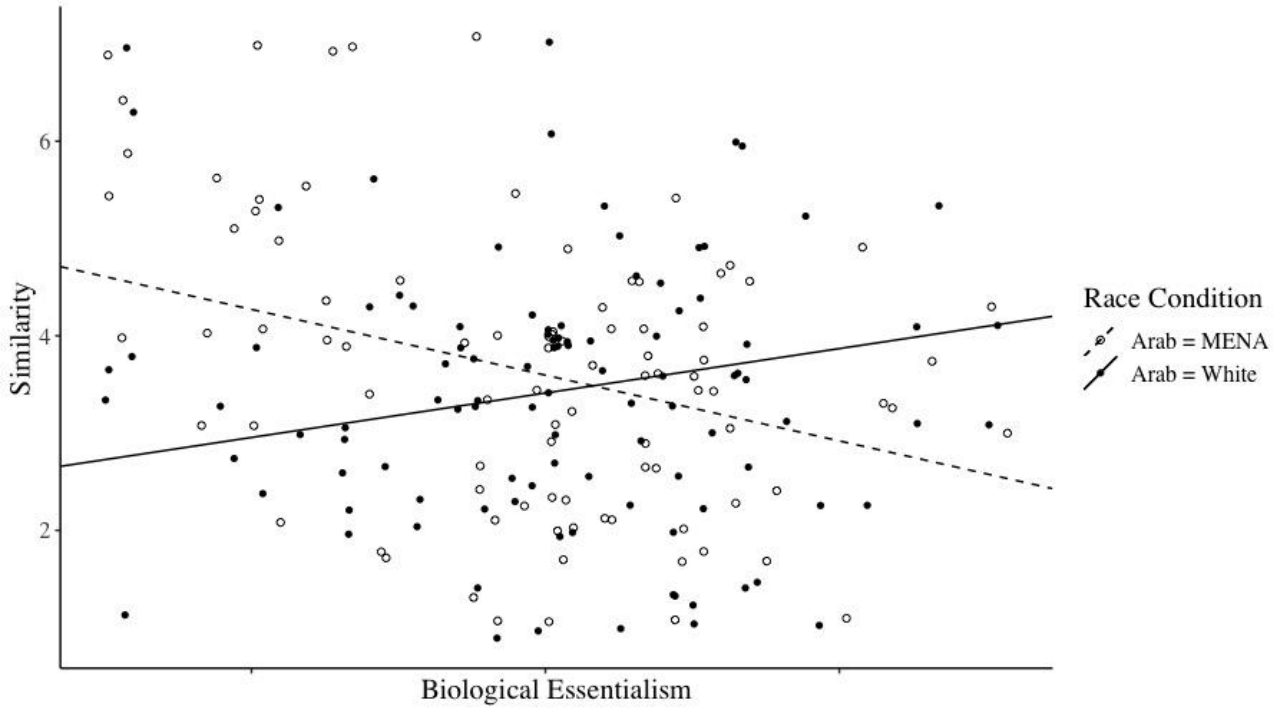

Figure 2. The interactive effect between biological essentialism and race condition on similarity

Step two also revealed a significant Race condition × Cultural essentialism interaction, b = -0.48, SE = .20, p = .02. Simple slope analyses revealed that, among participants in the *Arab = White* condition, cultural essentialism was negatively associated with perceptions of similarity, b = -0.57, SE = .13, $p < .001$. In contrast, among participants in the *Arab = MENA* condition, there was no association between cultural essentialism and perceptions of similarity, b = -0.08, SE = .15, p = .59. See *Figure 3*.

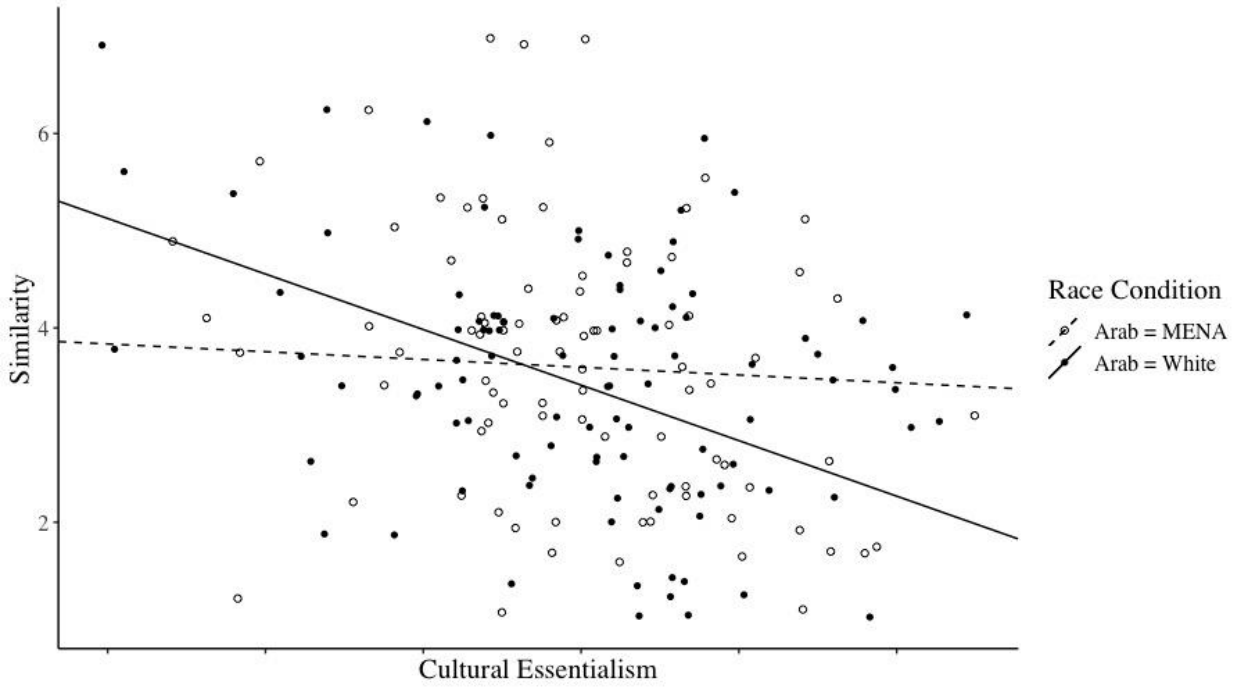

Figure 3. The interactive effect between cultural essentialism and race condition on similarity.

Discussion

The present study focused on the perceived similarity of Arab Americans among White Americans. Half of participants were led to categorize Arabs as members of their same racial group, and the other half were led to categorize Arabs as part of a distinct MENA group. The primary results indicated that identity and beliefs about the nature of racial groups influence perceptions of similarity.

Specifically, the more that participants identified with other White Americans, the less similar they perceived Arabs to be similar to their own group. One could propose that a content-specific measure of White racial identity that taps European heritage or cultural norms would be especially likely to negatively predict perceived similarity. However, it is important to note that the measure of racial identity was a broad measure of social identity (i.e. not content-specific, "I identify with other White Americans"). We thus interpret the significant effect of White racial

identity as indication that the participants imbued a culturally meaningful definition of Whiteness (perhaps a proxy of Americanness, see Devos & Banaji, 2005) that excludes Arabs.

Consistent with past research, the present study revealed distinct patterns depending on the type of essentialism predicting similarity. In comparing the *Race condition × Biological essentialism* and *Race condition × Cultural essentialism* it is useful to focus specifically on the *Arab = White* condition; the half of participants in this condition reported their perceptions of Arab similarity when Arabs were purportedly part of their group. Among these participants, biological essentialism positively predicted similarity, whereas cultural essentialism negatively predicted similarity. It may be that endorsement of biological essentialism ironically refers to a shared quality that is tangible (i.e., rooted in genes and physiology) but not meaningful. Thus, exposure to different information (learning that Arabs are White, or something else) is strong enough to differentially change the relationship between endorsement of biological essentialism and similarity. Conversely, cultural essentialism may be perceived as the truly descriptive, deterministic quality that does not fit through the permeable barrier separating Arab and White identity in the same way that genes/physiology can.

In interpreting these results, it is also important to note that the present primary outcome—similarity—is not a measure of prejudice or outgroup antipathy per se. Most intergroup research on essentialism studies prejudice as an outcome. Though biological and cultural essentialism were strongly correlated, the self-relevant nature of perceived similarity could lead to multiple interpretations. It could be argued that White participants seeing Arabs as dissimilar occurs either as a function of a normative effort towards multicultural awareness or as a more traditional hostile exclusion. Based on the current results, it appears that White Americans who believe in group essences will accept Arabs as similar to a certain degree—they

may be included to the extent that being informed *Arab = White* is an indication of shared genetic heritage, but in terms of the more meaningful defining qualities like values and practices, Arabs are different.

Study 4

Study 3 showed that, depending on endorsement of essentialism beliefs, salience of Arab racial categorization—either as White or MENA—predicts perceptions of Arabs as similar to White. The present study reverses the roles of these variables. Rather than examining the influence of the categorization, the present study treats the categorization as an outcome for which participants can rate their agreement. This allows an analysis of moderating factors in support for different forms of Arab categorization. The structure of this study thus reflects ongoing deliberations about the inclusion of a new category, as some Arab American non-governmental organizations and civil advocacy groups are currently applying for legal recognition (see Arab American Institute, 2018).

Beyond the study mirroring this external reality, we think it is also important to imbue the decision in this study with its important sociopolitical implications. Officially, the U.S. Census Bureau collects information on race for civil rights decisions, to meet legislative redistricting principles, and promote equality in employment and health, among other domains (U.S. Census, 2018). To the extent that Americans of Arab descent currently experience inequitable outcomes on the basis of their group membership, they stand to benefit from this designation. However, some Arab Americans disapprove of efforts to achieve legal status, citing the increased security attention that Arabs suffered post-9/11(see, for example, AJ+, 2016). This argument suggests that Arabs identifying themselves on the census form is actually doing the work for a government that wishes to facilitate their surveillance. Thus, one goal in this study is to examine the extent to which such outcomes influence White Americans' preference for how Arab Americans are categorized. Would White Americans prefer that Arabs be counted as part of their

group, or would creating a separate category be more attractive if it meant that Arabs would receive material benefits, or that they could be easier to surveil?

We also consider perceptions of threat in response to the political specificity being added to the question of Arab categorization. It may be threatening for certain White participants, despite a preference for a contrary option, to learn that Arabs could materially gain from being counted as a separate category. Likewise, priming of a supposed security risk posed by Arabs may bolster support for a separate category that accurately counts the group rather than silences the risk by subsuming them within the White category.

Method

Participants. Participants were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants of any racial background could participate, resulting in an initial sample of 480 participants. We then filtered out all participants who self-categorized with any category other than White based on U.S. Census categories, resulting in a final sample of 379 participants (M_{age} = 36.51 years), of whom 47.22 % identified as female and who earned $1.00 US in exchange for their completion of the approximately 10-minute experiment.

Participants read an introduction nearly identical to that used in Study 3. Namely, the study was interested in assessing familiarity with the U.S. Census and its designated races.

Potential moderators. After self-categorizing based on current U.S. race categories, participants completed a single-item measure of racial identification ("I identify with White Americans"). Next, participants completed the same three-item measure of American identification (α = .88) used in Study 3.

On the following page, the experiment transitioned to ostensibly study "people's knowledge of the U.S. Census race categories in the past and present." Participants then read that one example of this "evolution of the form is how residents of Arab descent are classified."

Knowledge of Arab racial categorization. Participants immediately thereafter responded to a Yes/No question of whether they had previous knowledge of the fact that Arabs are classified as White.

Participants next read further about this categorization and the legal definition of the White racial category. We took several steps to promote an ambivalence about the inclusion of Arabs in the White racial category. First, the White racial category was defined as "people with origins in the original peoples the Middle East and North Africa." This definition was intentionally incomplete in its omission of Europe in the included regions of ancestry. Second, participants viewed a map of the world that highlighted what is referred to as the Middle East. Third, below the map, participants read a list naming some of countries highlighted and whose diaspora would be counted as White in the U.S.: "The Middle East/North Africa includes countries/territories such as Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen."

Manipulation of (potential) recategorization justification. On the following page, all participants read that the U.S. had "begun its consideration for adding a racial classification option that allows residents of Arab descent to check off "Middle Eastern/North African." This would provide another option for Arabs who do not consider themselves White." In addition, all participants read that "One reason the Census Bureau is seriously considering adding the Middle Eastern/North African option is that it would identify areas of the country where Arabs and Arab

Americans live." The three levels of this manipulation differed only in the further justification provided for reconsidering the categorization of Arabs in the U.S.

In the *security condition*, participants read that identifying Arabs with a specific census category "can be used to allocate funding for law enforcement, intelligence services, counterterrorism, and other security measures. Law enforcement records show, for instance, that records of Arab populations can promote collaboration with local communities, which has led to the identification of radicalization and the thwarting of criminal and terrorist activity."

In the *affirmative action condition*, participants read that identifying Arabs with a specific census category "can be used to allocate funding for affirmative action policies like small business loans and hiring policies, as well as to better monitor discrepancies in health and employment outcomes caused by discrimination. Economic records show, for instance, that since Arabs are a minority group, they stand to benefit from special grants to promote equality in business and higher education."

In the *control condition*, participants did not read any further justification.

Measures. For all measures, participants rated the extent to which they agreed with statements using a scale from 1 (*Completely disagree*) to 7 (*Completely agree*).

Realistic and symbolic threat. Next, participants responded to items adapted from Stephan & Stephan (1985) assessing their perceptions that Arab immigrants would pose a disproportionate practical burden or an unwanted cultural influence in the U.S. Four items assessed realistic threat: "Arab immigrants are taking jobs away from American citizens," "Arab immigrants are making our neighborhoods less safe," "Arab immigrants should be eligible for the same health-care benefits received by American citizens," and "Arab immigration has increased the tax burden on Americans," $\alpha = .90$. Four items assessed symbolic threat: "The

values and beliefs of Arab immigrants are not compatible with the values and beliefs of most Americans," "Arab immigrants share the same moral values as most Americans," "Arab immigration is undermining traditional American culture," and "Arab immigration is contaminating America's reputation as moral and good," $\alpha = .90$.

Perceived similarity. Participants completed the same two items assessing perceived similarity between Arabs and Whites as used in Study 3, $\alpha = .82$.

Manipulation of U.S. Census Bureau decision. Participants were randomly assigned to read about one two ultimate outcomes of the U.S. Census Bureau's purported deliberations on adding a MENA category.

In the *Arab = White condition*, participants learned that the Bureau has "decided to maintain the current categorization of Arabs and other residents with heritage in the Middle East/North Africa as part of the White racial category. This means that on the 2020 Census Arabs will continue to check off the White box."

In the *Arab = MENA condition,* participants learned that the Bureau has "decided to officially add the Middle Eastern/North African racial category. This means that on the 2020 Census, Arabs will check the Middle Eastern/North African box instead of the White box."

All participants rated their level of agreement with the decision on a scale from 0 (*Completely disagree*) to 100 (*Completely agree*).

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated their gender group identity, highest level of attained education (1 = *Grade school*, 5 = *Post-graduate training*), age, and political orientation (1 = *Very liberal*, 7 = *Very conservative*).

Results

First, we conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the justification manipulation as the independent variable, and with both threat variables and similarity as the dependent variables. The multivariate analysis showed no significant effect of the manipulation on any of the dependent variables, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.99$, $F(2, 376) = .54$, $p = .77$. In Table 7, we thus present the means and correlations between all the variables (including the proposed demographic covariates) across both conditions.

Table 7. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables in Study 4.

			Correlations				
	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
(1) Racial identification	5.13	1.46	--	0.49**	0.29**	0.27**	-0.24**
(2) American identification	5.42	1.33		--	0.36**	0.38**	-0.25**
(3) Realistic threat	2.84	1.50			--	0.84**	-0.41**
(4) Symbolic threat	3.18	1.57				--	-0.48**
(5) Similarity	3.65	1.47					--

** $p < .01$

We next turned to examining the effects of the second manipulation on dependent measures that followed its administration. An independent-samples t-test revealed that participants expressed significantly more support for a policy that categorized Arabs as MENA ($M = 77.97$, $SD = 26.93$) than a policy that categorized Arabs as White ($M = 37.06$, $SD = 30.88$), $t(362.07) = 13.834$, $p < .001$.

We next ran two models to further explore how the remaining variables predicted support for the two categorization policies. Given the high correlation between both threat subscales ($r = 0.84$), we created a composite based on all items into a single overall *threat* measure. The first model, which only included the main effects of both manipulations and their interaction, once

again revealed only a main effect of the *Decision* manipulation and no significant interaction, b = 4.39, p = 0.55 (see Figure 4).

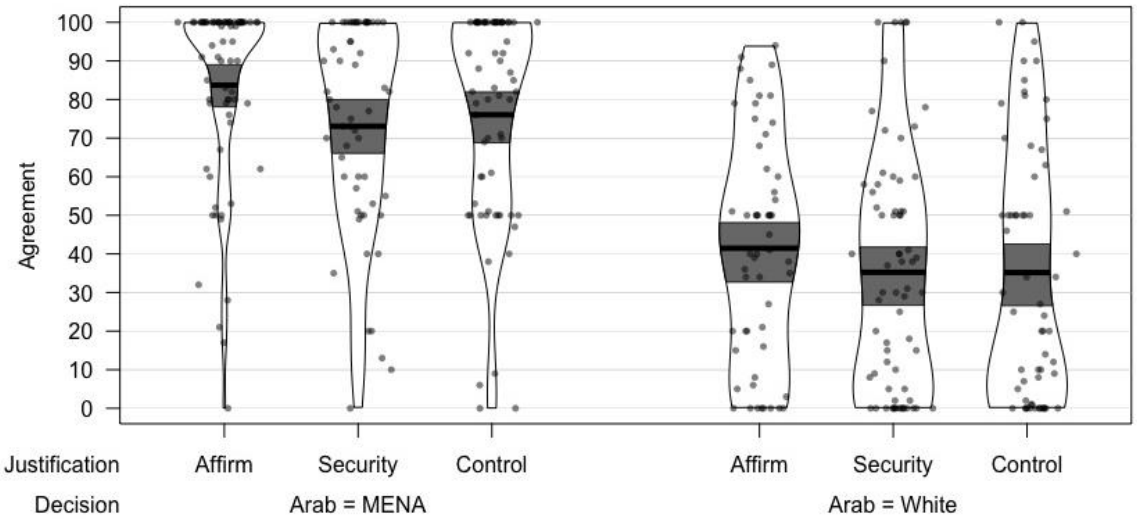

Figure 4. Main effect of decision and null interaction between decision and justification condition on agreement.

The second model added all of the additional moderators and their interactions with the *Decision* manipulation (see Table 8). Once again, the *Decision* manipulation proved to be significant, revealing that participants were more likely to support categorization of Arabs as MENA rather than Arabs as White. No main effects for American identification, White racial identification, or threat emerged as significant, ps > .6. The lone additional main effect predictor of agreement was similarity, which was qualified by a Decision × Similarity interaction, b = 18.94, SE = 2.05, p < .001, which was the only significant interaction.

Table 8. *Multiple Regression Results Predicting Perceived Policy Support.*

Predictor	Estimate	SE	*p*
Political orientation	-0.05	0.54	0.92
Decision:			
Arab = MENA – Arab = White	46.54	4.59	< .001
Condition:			
Security – Affirmative Action	-10.70	4.48	0.02
Control – Affirmative Action	-5.52	4.35	0.21
American identification	0.59	1.56	0.71
Racial identification	-0.69	1.46	0.64
Threat	-0.69	1.48	0.64
Similarity	-7.24	1.42	< .001
Decision × Condition: *Control*	5.48	6.45	0.40
Decision × Condition: *Security*	11.13	6.47	0.09
Decision × American identification	2.21	2.41	0.36
Decision × Racial identification	1.88	2.11	0.37
Decision × Threat	-0.30	2.13	0.88
Decision × Similarity	18.94	2.06	< .001
R^2			0.49

Simple slope analyses revealed that perceived similarity was positively associated with support for the *Arab = White* decision, $b = 11.39$, $SE = 1.49$, $p < .001$. In contrast, perceived similarity was negatively associated with support for the *Arab = MENA* decision, $b = -7.21$, $SE = 1.42$, $p < .001$. See Figure .

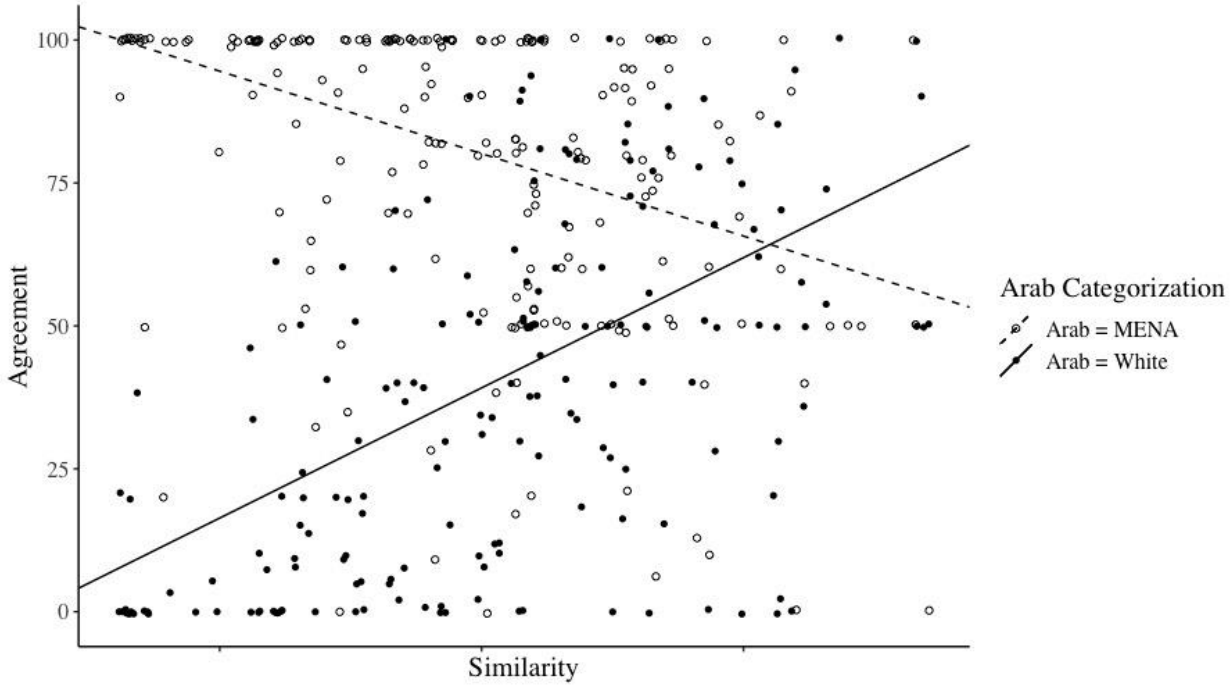

Figure 5. The interactive effect between similarity and categorization on agreement.

Discussion

Study 4 tested whether adding sociopolitical content to the question of Arab categorization influenced perceptions of threat or similarity among White Americans. We expected that such content would elicit stronger intergroup comparative processes given that the White participants would most likely not have previously considered their own racial identity to be the basis for affirmative action policies or increased surveillance. The results showed that this content did not predict changes in threat or similarity, nor did this manipulation interact with relevant identity variables.

The clearest results emerged with the *Decision* manipulation. Regardless of the justification, participants supported the policy most strongly when it categorized Arabs in a different group. It did not matter if the decision was based either on equity- or security-oriented policies. If, for example, participants perceived the security justification as harmful, we should have observed an interaction between the two manipulations, such that participants would be

especially disapproving if they were informed that the Census Bureau eventually decided to categorize Arabs as MENA based on the security justification. The threat measure, too, did not moderate the effect of the *Decision* manipulation, further indication that specific anti-Arab attitudes were factors in participants' responses to Arab categorization.

Instead, the effect of the *Decision* condition was only moderated by perceived similarity. The marginal means were especially divergent among participants who perceive low similarity between Arabs and Whites. Among these participants, agreement with the decision was high when Arabs were ultimately categorized in a separate group, and low when Arabs were categorized as part of their own group. We interpret this interaction emerging while controlling for threat and social identification as evidence of a more straightforward categorization process whereby participants perceive Arabs in terms of their cultural distinctiveness (as seen in Study 3) but not necessarily in terms of their threat to the White or American categories. Put differently, it is not highly identifying as American or White or being threatened by Arab Americans that drives support for a categorization. Instead, the participants who have the strongest feelings about Arab categorization may be described as feeling that Arabs "are just different."

General Discussion

Arab Americans have been characterized as "ambiguous insiders" (Naber, 2000) in the U.S. racial/ethnic imagination. They are, along with Americans of European descent, legally categorized as White. Few would dispute, however, that Americans of European and Arab descent enjoy qualitatively different social experiences. The present studies sought to examine how people living in the U.S. on each side of this question determine who would be counted as White or something else. Importantly, the present studies were not focused on determining the necessity or defending a logic for separate categories; rather, the purpose of the present studies was to understand how the interplay of social experience and beliefs about groups interact to shape the psychosocial construction of group membership.

Studies 1 and 2 examined how social experience shapes racial categorization among Arab Americans. In Study 1, Arab Americans were more likely to *not* self-categorize as White the more they perceived discrimination, the darker their skin, and if they were Muslim (vs. Christian). Arab American and American identification were not significant predictors of racial self-categorization. In Study 2, a restriction to identify as White did not singlehandedly influence Arab American or American identification, or subgroup respect, among a convenience sample of highly identified Arab Americans. However, the option to identify as MENA did convey increasing levels of subgroup respect the more that participants identified with the superordinate American group.

Studies 3 and 4 examined how, among White Americans, group beliefs and perceptions of similarity shapes responses to Arab racial categorization. In Study 3, the inclusion of Arabs in the White racial category (vs. in a separate MENA category) did not exert a main effect on perceptions of similarity. However, the effect of the manipulation interacted differentially with

biological and cultural essentialism. Among participants low in biological essentialism, Arabs were seen as more similar when categorized as MENA; among participants high in biological essentialism, Arabs were seen as more similar when categorized as White. And the more that participants endorsed cultural essentialism, the less similar their perceptions of Arabs when Arabs were categorized as White. That this latter effect emerged while controlling for perceptions of Arabs as threatening could be an indication of a non-prejudicial perception of Arabness as a cultural identity sufficiently distinct from whiteness.

In Study 4, White participants were overwhelmingly supportive of categorization of Arabs as MENA rather than White, irrespective of the justification provided (either affirmative action, security, or control). This support was especially strong among participants who perceived Arabs as dissimilar; support was not moderated by perceptions of threat or level of racial or national identification.

The methods and results speak to the potential of studying categorization processes by borrowing from institutional classifications (i.e., from the Census). That is, the studies deployed such normal sociocultural processes as how people are meant to identify themselves on forms and turned that process into externally relevant material for experimental work. Studies 1 and 2 did not draw any extra attention to the act of categorization, only treating the categorization act as naturally occurring processes and analyzing self-categorization as an outcome (Study 1) or manipulation (Study 2). Studies 3 and 4 directly contextualized for participants the procedure within U.S. Census Bureau's racial categorizations.

We thus argue that this research contributes to the body of work that studies the reification of racial categories through familiar cultural products. Census forms do not merely tabulate where people live and what their backgrounds are, they are also affordances for people

to “ask questions about themselves” (Cohn, 1987, p. 230), the answers to which promote social and individual definitions of race/ethnicity (Gualtieri, 2009). Indeed, a growing qualitative literature illuminates the depth with which Arab Americans respondents reflect on the meaning of their race and ethnicity when asked about the categorization process (e.g. Cainkar, 2008).

All together, the results point to the social and motivational factors underpinning (self-) categorization of Arabs as White or not quite. Categorizing as part of a group is not simply a function of the available, institutionally recognized groups; if it were, the categorization of Arabs, either by Arabs themselves or White Americans, would not interact with changing definitions or underlying motives, group identifications, and group theories. Instead, consistent with the social identity approach, categorizing as part of a group is a function of how the social world shapes lives based on group interests and conflicts, and people in turn understand themselves in these terms (Omi & Winant, 1994). In social psychological and historical terms, Arabs have, since their initial immigration, contested their racial categorization depending on the intergroup context. When they were mostly Christian and economically successful, Arabs in America fought for recognition as White. When they became increasingly Muslim and otherwise diverse, and in the wake of geopolitical events that fractured the harmony between their Arab and American selves, they learned of their Otherness and searched for new ways to racially identify and categorize.

While the results may be used to reach different conclusions on the necessity of a MENA category in different settings, they uniformly point to the fact that, at the very least, Arab is a “lived race” (Harris & Sim, 2002) because people do understand themselves, others, and intergroup relations through this category, often in reference to other races, despite its regular absence from identification forms. As stated by Jamal (2008):

> Arabs neither are seen as white nor are they granted an officially defined minority status; rather, they stand outside all racial demarcations in an ambiguous, precarious position of Otherness compounded by existing policies and perceptions. Regardless, then, of the boxes Arabs check—whether white, black, or other—their racialization, which has resulted in a perception of Otherness, is real.

Limitations and Future directions

Several limitations should be considered while interpreting these results. First, only the first of the Arab American samples (Study 1) was representative, and even results from this sample should be generalized with caution due to their source being one of the largest Arab metropolitan communities in the United States. The sample in Study 2 was also limited by its recruitment of college students only, the results from which revealed a highly ethnically identified sample. Still, the coherence of the results from both studies indicates a pattern that can be further examined with replications.

One aspect of the research in particular that deserves future consideration is religious group membership. Only Study 1 directly considered the role of religion and incorporated religious affiliation in analyses. Study 2 did not recruit a religiously diverse enough sample, and Studies 3 and 4 did not probe how the religious affiliation of targets influences White American perceptions. Given the historical and contemporary trends that differentiate the experience of Muslim and Christian Arab Americans, further work should consider the way these group memberships influence Arab American self-understanding as well as considerations of Arab American categorization by White Americans and broader society. For instance, Muslim Arab Americans perceive more discrimination, and the relationship between discrimination and

identification with their religious group is stronger than for Christian Arab Americans (Hakim, Molina, & Branscombe, 2017), The inclusion of religion in further research would be especially useful in merging the visible and symbolic components that we typically use in defining race, which further intersects with gender (since, for instance, some Muslim women wear a distinctive head covering and may be more visible and thus more likely to be racialized as non-White). Consistent with the present results, we would predict that veils (or other religiously inspired garments) would, like complexion, serve as a visual marker of non-White racialization and may lead to more experiences of perceptions of discrimination, which would further predict categorization as non-White by the targets and perceivers.

One straightforward next step would be to treat categorization of Arab Americans as a categorical outcome for European American participants. Only Study 1 among Arab Americans treated categorization as an outcome in this way, and further studies in this vein would also fall in line with methodological approaches in studies of the categorization of multiracial people. Such an outcome would invite the possibility for further moderators or mediators. For instance, an internal motivation to control prejudice was associated with higher likelihood to categorize Black-White multiracial people as multiracial (instead of as Black; Chen, Moons, Gaither, Hamilton, & Sherman, 2014). Another benefit of treating categorization as a categorical outcome would allow for examining the role of perceived similarity, an outcome in the present work, as a potential mediator (as in Good, Chavez, & Sanchez, 2010).

Conclusion

Arab Americans occupy a peculiar inbetweenness in terms of race/ethnicity in the U.S. (Gualtieri, 2009). Arabs are, along with residents of European descent, legally categorized as White, yet many facets of their experience and social representations imagine the group as an

"Other." Across four studies, Arab Americans confirmed themselves and were confirmed by European Americans as improper fits to the normative understanding of White.

Racial categorization is a sociocultural process that is not restricted to individual cognition. Because race is "a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies" (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 55), membership in these groups is fundamentally contingent upon ongoing, and shifting, intergroup relations. Despite some Arabs' physical appearances allowing them to pass as White, Arabs may still currently lie outside imaginations of Whiteness because rather than merely referencing different human bodies, racialization of Arabs references conscious ideologies and specific cultural content.

References

AJ+. [2016. November 1]. *Are Arabs 'White'? | AJ+*. [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ec7J1yIKVdQ.

Arab American Institute (2018, April 26). 2020 Census: Reaching an Accurate Count. Retrieved from http://www.aaiusa.org/2020census

Baker, W., Stockton, R., Howell, S., Jamal, A., Lin, A. C., Shryock, A., & Tessler, M. (2006). Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS), 2003. *Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)[distributor]*.

Begley, J. (2016). *Racebox.org: The Census since 1790.* Retrieved from http://racebox.org

Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T., & Harvey, R. D. (1999). Perceiving pervasive discrimination among African-Americans: Implications for group identification and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *77*, 135–149.

Brunsma, D. L., & Rockquemore, K. A. (2001). The new color complex: Appearances and biracial identity. *Identity*, *1*(3), 225–246.

Cainkar, L. (2008). Thinking outside the box: Arabs and race in the United States. In A. Jamal & N. Naber (Eds.), *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: From invisible citizens to visible subjects* (pp. 46-80). Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Cainkar, L. A. (2009). *Homeland insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American experience after 9/11*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Chen, J. M., Moons, W. G., Gaither, S. E., Hamilton, D. L., & Sherman, J. W. (2014). Motivation to control prejudice predicts categorization of multiracials. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, *40*(5), 590–603.

Clemetson, L. (2004, July 30). Homeland security given data on Arab-Americans. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2004/07/30/us/homeland-security-given-data-on-arab-americans.html

Cohn, B.S. (1987). *An anthropologist among the historians and other essays*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Davenport, L. D. (2016). The role of gender, class, and religion in biracial Americans' racial labeling decisions. *American Sociological Review, 81*(1), 57-84.

Detroit Arab American Study Team. (2009). *Citizenship and crisis: Arab Detroit after 9/11*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation

Devos, T., & Banaji, M. R. (2005). American= white? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*(3), 447.

Fields, K. E., & Fields, B. J. (2012). *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso Books.

Good, J. J., Chavez, G. F., & Sanchez, D. T. (2010). Sources of self-categorization as minority for mixed-race individuals: Implications for affirmative action entitlement. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *16*(4), 453–460.

Greenaway, K.H., Haslam, S.A., Cruwys, T., Branscombe, N.R., Ysseldyk, R., & Heldreth, C. (2015). From "we" to "me": Group identification enhances perceived personal control with consequences for health and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 109,* 53-74

Gualtieri, S. (2009). *Between Arab and White: Race and ethnicity in the early Syrian American diaspora.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hakim, N. H., Molina, L. E., & Branscombe, N. R. (2017). How discrimination shapes social identification processes and well-being among Arab Americans. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 9*(3), 328–337.

Harris, B., Ravert, R. D., & Sullivan, A. L. (2017). Adolescent racial identity: Self-identification of multiple and "Other" race/ethnicities. *Urban Education, 52*(6), 775–794.

Harris, D. R., & Sim, J. J. (2002). Who is Multiracial? Assessing the complexity of lived race. *American Sociological Review, 67*(4), 614–627.

Haslam, N., Rothschild, L., & Ernst, D. (2002). Are essentialist beliefs associated with prejudice? *British Journal of Social Psychology, 41*, 87–100.

Haslam, S. A., Ellemers, N., Reicher, S. D., Reynolds, K. J., Schmitt, M. T., & Others. (2010). The social identity perspective today: The impact of its defining ideas. In T. Postmes, & N. Branscombe (Eds.), *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 341-356). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Ho, A. K., Roberts, S. O., & Gelman, S. A. (2015). Essentialism and racial bias jointly contribute to the categorization of multiracial individuals. *Psychological Science, 26*(10), 1639–1645.

Hornsey, M. J., & Hogg, M. A. (2000). Assimilation and diversity: An integrative model of subgroup relations. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 4*(2), 143–156.

Huddy, L., Khatib, N., & Capelos, T. (2002). The polls—trends: Reactions to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 66*, 418–450.

Huo, Y. J., & Molina, L. E. (2006). Is pluralism a viable model of diversity? The benefits and limits of subgroup respect. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 9*, 359–376.

Jacobson, M.F. (1998). *Whiteness of a different color*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jamal, A. (2008). Conclusion. In A. Jamal & N. Naber (Eds.), *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: From invisible citizens to visible subjects* (pp. 318-323). Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Jetten, J., Branscombe, N.R., Haslam, S.A., Haslam, C., Cruwys, T., Jones, J.M., Cui, L., Dingle, G., Liu, J., Murphy, S., Thai, A., Walter, Z., & Zhang, A. (2015). Having a lot of a good thing: Multiple important group memberships as a source of self-esteem. *PLOS ONE, 10(5)*: e0124609.

Mowen, T. J., & Stansfield, R. (2016). Probing change in racial self-identification: A focus on children of immigrants. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, *2*(3), 323–337.

Naber, N. (2000). Ambiguous insiders: An investigation of Arab American invisibility. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *23*, 37–61.

Naff, A. (1985). *Becoming American: The early Arab immigrant experience*. Carbondale & Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (2nd ed.). New York & London: Routledge.

Samhan, H. (1987). Politics and exclusion: the Arab American experience. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, *16*(2), 20-28.

Sanchez, D. T., Chavez, G., Good, J. J., & Wilton, L. S. (2012). The language of acceptance: Spanish proficiency and perceived intragroup rejection among Latinos. *Journal of Cross- Cultural Psychology*, *43*(6), 1019–1033.

Sears, D. O., Henry, P. J., & Kosterman, R. (2000). Egalitarian values and contemporary racial politics. In D. O. Sears, J. Sidanius, & L. Bobo (Eds.), *Racialized politics: The debate about racism in America* (pp. 75–117). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schmitt, M.T., Spears, R., & Branscombe, N.R. (2003). Constructing a minority group identity out of shared rejection: The case of international students. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33,* 1-12.

Shaheen, J. G. (2003). Reel bad Arabs: How Hollywood vilifies a people. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 588*, 171–193.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). "Can the subaltern speak?" In C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (pp. 271-313). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (1985). Intergroup anxiety. *Journal of Social Issues, 41,* 157-175.

Suleiman, M., & Abu-Laban, B. (1989). Introduction. In M. Suleiman (Ed.) *Arab Americans: Continuity & change* (pp. 1-16). Washington, D.C.: Arab American University Graduates.

Tabb, K. M. (2016). Changes in racial categorization over time and health status: an examination of multiracial young adults in the USA. *Ethnicity & Health*, *21*(2), 146–157.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–48). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.

Turner, J. C. (1985). Social categorization and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behaviour. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes* (Vol. 2, pp. 77–122). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell.

Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and collective: Cognition and social context. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, *20*, 454–463.

United States Census Bureau. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

Wilton, L. S., Sanchez, D. T., & Chavez, G. F. (2013). Speaking the language of diversity: Spanish fluency, White ancestry, and skin color in the distribution of diversity awards to Latinos. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *35*(4), 346–359.

Vargas, N. (2015). Latina/o whitening?: Which Latina/os self-classify as White and report being perceived as White by other Americans? *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *12*(1), 119–136.